

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 DHA-02 SSO-00 NSCE-00 INRE-00
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FM AMEMBASSY LISBON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1473

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: SHUM, PO
SUBJ: HUMAN RIGHTS

REF: FOURIER/THOMAS TELECON OF MAY 18

1. STATUS OF MILITARY TRIALS: THERE ARE ABOUT 50
MILITARY MEN WHOSE CASES ARE UNDER REVIEW - MOST FOR
VIOLATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND MILITARY REGULATIONS
PRIOR TO NOV 25, 1975. ALL THESE INDIVIDUALS ARE AT
LIBERTY PENDING COMPLETION OF THEIR CASES. THEY MUST
OBTAIN PERMISSION TO MAKE PUBLIC STATEMENTS OR TRAVEL
ABROAD.

-- ARMY CASES: THE CASE OF 32 ARMY OFFICERS UNDER REVIEW FOR
VIOLATION OF MILITARY REGULATIONS INCLUDING TORTURE AND
ILLEGAL ARRESTS REMAINS BEFORE THE ARMY SUPERIOR
DISCIPLINARY COUNCIL (SDC). THE SDC WILL
PRESENT ITS RECOMMENDATIONS TO ARMY CHIEF GENERAL
ROCHA VIEIRA FOR ACTION AGAINST THE 32. THE CASES
ARE EXPECTED TO COME BEFORE THE SDC WITHIN THE NEXT
MONTH ONCE DEFENSE ARGUMENTS ARE PREPARED (REF A).

-- NAVY VIOLATIONS: SEVEN NAVY OFFICERS ARE
AWAITING REVIEW OF THEIR CASES BY THE NAVAL SDC,
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WHICH WILL MAKE ITS RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE NAVY
CHIEF OF STAFF. THE SEVEN, INCLUDING FORMER
REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL MEMBER ROSA COUTINHO, ARE
CHARGED WITH ILLEGAL ARRESTS AND OTHER VIOLATIONS
PRIOR TO NOV 25, 1975.

-- AIR FORCE AWAITS NOV 25 ACTIONS: APPROXIMATELY SIX
AIR FORCE OFFICERS ARE AWAITING TRIAL BY THE

SUPREME MILITARY TRIBUNAL. THEY ARE CHARGED WITH PARTICIPATION IN THE NOV 25 COUP ATTEMPT.

-- SEVERAL MAR 11 CASES PENDING: A HALF-DOZEN NATIONAL GUARD OFFICERS AND AIR FORCE COLONEL DURAO, ACCUSED OF PARTICIPATING IN THE MAR 11, 1975 COUP ATTEMPT, ARE AWAITING TRIAL BY THE SUPREME MILITARY TRIBUNAL.

2. GOP EFFORTS TO IMPROVE LOT OF POORT: THE GOP HAS TAKEN NUMEROUS MEASURES TO BENEFIT THE LEAST ADVANTAGED:

-- HOUSING: THE GOP WILL CONSTRUCT IN 1977 AN ESTIMATED 11,500 HOUSING UNITS THROUGHOUT PORTUGAL FOR SLUM RESIDENTS AND REFUGEES.

-- HEALTH: IN ORDER TO IMPROVE HEALTH CONDITIONS AMONG PORTUGAL'S RURAL AND LOW INCOME POPULATION, GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS ARE UNDER WAY TO CONSTRUCT SANITARY WATER AND SEWAGE FACILITIES THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY AT A COST IN 1977 OF 50 MILLION DOLLARS. IN ADDITION AN INTEGRATED NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE IS BEING FORMED TO REPLACE THE INEFFICIENT, ELITIST HEALTH INSTITUTIONS EXISTING UNDER THE SALAZAR REGIME.

-- EDUCATION: PORTUGAL'S 35 PERCENT ILLITERACY RATE AND WOEFUL LACK OF EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY, PARTICULARLY IN RURAL AREAS, IS BEING ATTACKED THROUGH A LARGE-SCALE PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION PROGRAM. SPECIAL ALLOWANCES ARE GIVEN TO FAMILIES BELOW A CERTAIN INCOME LEVEL TO BUY BOOKS AND OTHER SCHOOL MATERIALS. IN 1977 ABOUT 19 PERCENT OF THE NATIONAL BUDGET IS BEING DIRECTED TOWARD EDUCATION.

-- SOCIAL SECURITY AND WELFARE BENEFITS: IN THE PAST LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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THREE YEARS, PORTUGAL HAS EXPANDED SOCIAL SECURITY AND WELFARE BENEFITS AND COVERAGE; INCREASED THE AMOUNT OF BENEFITS; AND EXTENDED THE LENGTH OF TIME BENEFITS CAN BE CLAIMED. DURING A PERIOD OF HIGH INFLATION, THE GOP HAS SOUGHT TO MAINTAIN THE PURCHASING POWER OF THE POOR BY SUBSIDIZING PRICES OF ESSENTIAL GOODS.

-- REFUGEE ASSISTANCE: PORTUGAL'S MOST DRAMATIC HUMAN-ITARIAN GESTURE HAS BEEN THE MASSIVE GOVERNMENTAL AND PRIVATE EFFORT TO ABSORB AND ASSIST MORE THAN A HALF MILLION RETURNEES AND REFUGEES ADMITTED WITHOUT REGARD TO RACE FROM AFRICA AND TIMOR. AT A TIME OF GREAT NATIONAL ECONOMIC DIFFICULTIES, THE GOP SPENT 9 PERCENT OF ITS 1976 BUDGET TO HELP FEED, CLOTHE, AND PROVIDE EMPLOYMENT FOR RETURNEES.

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3. SUPPORT FOR U.S. HUMAN RIGHTS INITIATIVES: PORTUGAL HAS APPLAUDED AND SUPPORTED U.S. INITIATIVES IN THE HUMAN RIGHTS AREA. PRESIDENT EANES RECENTLY ISSUED WITH CONSIDERABLE FANFARE AN EDITION OF THE CHARTER OF THE RIGHTS OF MAN WITH A SPECIAL INTRODUCTION STRESSING THE PRESIDENT'S COMMITMENT TO HUMAN RIGHTS. PRIME MINISTER MARIO SOARES WARMLY RECEIVED ALLARD LOWENSTEIN, THE HEAD OF THE U.S. DELEGATION TO THE UN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION. SOARES IS ALSO SPONSORING THE VISIT TO PORTUGAL OF SOVIET DISSIDENT ANDREI AMALRIK. PORTUGUESE LEADERS HAVE PUBLICLY PROCLAIMED THEIR SUPPORT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND HAVE HIGHLIGHTED THE IDENTITY OF AMERICAN AND PORTUGUESE INTERESTS IN HUMAN RIGHTS. THE PORTUGUESE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY HAS TAKEN POSITIONS SIMILAR TO OURS ON MANY HUMAN RIGHTS QUESTIONS. THE ASSEMBLY PASSED MOTIONS CONDEMNING HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS IN BRAZIL, CHILE, ETHIOPIA, CZECHOSLOVAKIA, AND THE SOVIET UNION.

4. NONGOVERNMENTAL REACTIONS TO U.S. INITIATIVES: THE OVERALL REACTION TO U.S. EMPHASIS ON HUMAN RIGHTS HAS BEEN POSITIVE. THE PS, PSD, AND CDS HAVE SPONSORED OR SUPPORTED NUMEROUS LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY MOTIONS ON
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HUMAN RIGHTS. ONE ASSEMBLY MOTION, PASSED WITH THE SUPPORT OF THE PS, PSD, AND CDS, CALLED FOR AN INSTITUTION TO SUPERVISE FULFILLMENT OF THE HELSINKI AGREEMENT.

THE PSD YOUTH ORGANIZATION IS RUNNING A WEEKLY ARTICLE ON HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS THROUGHOUT THE WORLD. ANOTHER POLITICAL ASSOCIATION, THE MSD, SPONSORED THE VISIT OF A CZECH PROFESSOR TO PORTUGAL LAST MARCH IN SUPPORT OF CHARTER 77. A GROUP OF PORTUGAL'S INTELLECTUALS ISSUED A STATEMENT BACKING THE PRINCIPLES EMBODIED IN CHARTER 77. THE LEAGUE FOR THE RIGHTS OF MAN AND THE PORTUGUESE BAR ASSOCIATION HAVE EXPRESSED AN INTEREST IN HUMAN RIGHTS ACTIVITIES: THE MEDIA HAVE GIVEN CONSISTENTLY FAVORABLY PLAY TO U.S. INITIATIVES ON HUMAN RIGHTS. ONLY THE PCP AND COMMUNIST-LINING PRESS HAVE CLUNG TO A PURELY IDEOLOGICAL APPROACH TO HUMAN RIGHTS, OPPOSING ALL INITIATIVES AGAINST MOSCOW AND ITS ALLIES, AND PUBLICIZING VIOLATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN WESTERN COUNTRIES. THE COMMUNISTS HAVE ADOPTED A CYNICAL VIEW OF THE U.S. EMPHASIS ON HUMAN RIGHTS, POINTING TO ALLEGED HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS IN U.S. SOCIETY AND REJECTING AMERICAN CRITICISM OF OTHER NATIONS. DECONTROL UPON RECEIPT. CARLUCCI

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